

REMARKS

Summary of the Amendment

Upon entry of the above amendment, claims 19 and 50 will have been canceled, claims 1, 20, 21 and 47 will have been amended, and claims 51 and 52 will have been added. Accordingly, claims 1-18, 20-49, 51 and 52 will be pending with claims 1, 47 and 51 being in independent form. Claims 22-36, 38, 39, 41-46 and 49 stand withdrawn by the Examiner on the basis of a previous restriction requirement.

Summary of the Official Action

In the instant Office Action, the Examiner reiterated the previous restriction requirement and made the restriction requirement final. The Examiner also indicated that certain English language Abstracts cited on a form PTO-1449 were not considered because the Examiner did not have copies of these Abstracts. Additionally, the Examiner objected to the Abstract and to certain claims on the basis of asserted informalities. The Examiner also rejected claims 1-21, 40, 47 and 48 over the art of record. The Examiner, however, neglected to consider the merits of claim 37 as evidenced by the fact that this claim was neither indicated to contain allowable subject matter or rejected over the applied art of record. By the present amendment and remarks, Applicant submits that the objections and rejections have been overcome, and respectfully requests reconsideration of the outstanding Office Action and allowance of the present application.

Restriction Requirement

The Examiner reaffirmed the election of species restriction requirement and indicated that claims 22-36, 38, 39, 41-46, 49 and 50 were withdrawn. The Examiner also made the restriction requirement final. Applicant respectfully disagrees with the election of species requirement for the reasons already made of record, and are not, at this time, canceling the withdrawn claims pending an indication by the Examiner that the non-withdrawn claims are allowed.

Furthermore, Applicant respectfully requests that claims 22-36, 38, 39, 41-46 and 49 be rejoined if and when claims 1 and 47 are found allowable.

The Examiner cannot properly make the next action Final

Inasmuch as the Examiner has failed, in the instant Official action, to consider the merits of claim 37, Applicant submits that the next action cannot be made final. Applicant notes, in particular, that claim 37 was not specifically rejected or indicated to contain allowable subject matter.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner carefully consider and treat the merits of all pending claims in the next Official action.

Consideration of Certain IDS Documents

The Examiner crossed-out the following documents in the form PTO-1449 filed on April 21, 2004 because no copies of these documents were asserted to be in the

Examiner's file: English language Abstract of DE 10048889 and English language Abstract of DE 20015848. The Examiner also indicated that Applicant can provide copies of these documents with the instant response without payment of a fee or resubmitting another IDS.

Applicant notes that copies of these documents were in fact provided with the IDS filed on April 21, 2004. However, in view of the fact that the Examiner asserts that no such copies can be found in the Examiner's file, Applicant is providing another copy of these documents along with a form PTO-1449 listing the same.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner initial and sign the attached form PTO-1449 in order to indicate consideration of these documents.

Traversal of the Specification Objection

The Examiner objected to the Abstract because paragraph [0051] discloses a sleeve portion designated as B* of the first connecting part and because no such first connecting part has been described.

As a preliminary matter, Applicant fails to see how the Abstract is can be found to be objectionable on the basis asserted by the Examiner. As the Examiner will note, the Abstract does not include any language with regard to the first connecting part.

Moreover, Applicant is at a loss to understand the Examiner assertion that the first part is not described. As the Examiner will note from paragraphs [0050] – [0052] the specification refers to part 3* as either the first connecting element, the first connecting part or the retaining-spring arrangement. One having ordinary skill in the art would have no difficulty understanding what is meant the description.

Nevertheless, in an effort to advance prosecution, Applicant has amended paragraph [0051] in an effort to address the Examiner's concern.

In view of the above, Applicant requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the objection to the disclosure and indicate that the disclosure is acceptable under the Patent Office Rules.

Traversal of Claim Objection

Claims 1-21, 37, 40, 47 and 48 were objected to on the basis of asserted informalities.

Specifically, the Examiner asserted that these claims recite alternative features in a unclear manner. Applicant respectfully traverses each of the Examiner's assertions.

Applicant submits that the claims are not unclear. Claims 1 and 47 recite "one of an outwardly extending edge and outwardly extending edge segments arranged at the second end." This language is not unclear and, consistent with paragraph [0042] of the specification, clearly describes (without precluding the combination of both features) that the second end can have either:

- (1) an outwardly extending edge arranged at the second end, or
- (2) outwardly extending edge segments arranged at the second end.

Nor is the Examiner correct in implying that such expressions must be in the form of a Markush group. As the Examiner will note, MPEP 2172.05(h) merely requires that the alternative expressions "present no uncertainty or ambiguity with respect to the question of scope or clarity of the claims" and that a Markush group is but "[o]ne acceptable form of

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alternative expression".

With regard to the expressions in claim 15, Applicant submits that the alternative expressions are also clear, i.e., this claim recites (while not precluding the combination of both) either:

- (1) that the vibration-damping ring is permanently joined to the inner surface of the hollow cylinder member, or
- (2) that the vibration-damping ring is non-removably fixed to the inner surface of the hollow cylinder member.

With regard to the expressions in claim 40, Applicant submits that the alternative expressions are also clear, i.e., this claim recites (while not precluding the combination of both) either:

- (1) that the hollow cylinder member is adapted to compress elastically, whereby an outer diameter of the hollow cylinder member is capable of being reduced by compression., or
- (2) that the hollow cylinder member is adapted to compress radially, whereby an outer diameter of the hollow cylinder member is capable of being reduced by compression.

Accordingly, as Applicant has clearly demonstrated that the claims are in fact clear and unambiguous with regard to scope and clarity of the claims, and as the Examiner has failed to show how the claims are rendered unclear, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the objection of these claims.

Traversal of Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Over Radtke

Applicant traverses the rejection of claims 1 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by US published patent application No. 2002/0009350 to RADTKE.

The Examiner asserted that this document discloses all the features recited in these claims including the vibration-damping ring 6 and the hollow cylinder with an outwardly extending edge 7. Applicant respectfully traverse this rejection.

Notwithstanding the Office Action assertions as to what this document discloses, Applicant submits that this document fails to disclose, or even suggest: *inter alia*, one of an anti-slip material and a vibration-damping material *attached to an annular surface* of one of the outwardly extending edge and the outwardly extending edge segments, as recited in amended independent claim 1.

Applicant acknowledges that Figs. 3 and 4 of RADTKE disclose a hollow cylinder member 4 having an outwardly extending edge 7, that an elastically deformable member 6 having an outer surface is coupled to an inner surface of the hollow cylinder member 4, and that a dampening element 29 is arranged on the edge 7. However, it is apparent from a fair reading of the disclosure that RADTKE does not disclose, or even suggest, that the element 29 is *attached to an annular surface* of the edge 7. Applicant notes, in particular, that paragraph [0032] merely indicates that the element 29 “is provided between the flange 7 and the component 27.”

By way of non-limiting example, Applicant’s invention provides for attachment by

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e.g., adhesive bonding or vulcanization (see paragraph [0043]).

Thus, Applicant submits that the above-noted claims are not disclosed, or even suggested, by any proper reading of RADTKE.

Applicant further notes that, for an anticipation rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102 to be proper, each element of the claim in question must be disclosed in a single document, and if the document relied upon does not do so, then the rejection must be withdrawn.

Because each of these documents fails to disclose at least the above mentioned features as recited in independent claim 1, Applicant submits that this document does not disclose all the claimed features recited in at least independent claim 1.

Furthermore, Applicant submits that dependent claim 9 is allowable at least for the reason that this claim depends from allowable base claim and because this claim recites additional features that further define the present invention. In particular, Applicant submits that no proper reading of RADTKE discloses or suggests, in combination: that the outwardly extending edge or the outwardly extending edge segments extend substantially perpendicular to an axis running through the hollow cylinder member, as recited in claim 9.

Applicant requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of the above-noted claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Over Roth

Applicant traverses the rejection of claims 1, 9-15, 17, 47 and 48 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by US patent No. 5,397,112 to ROTH et al.

The Examiner asserted that this document discloses all the features recited in these

claims including the vibration-damping ring 16 and the hollow cylinder with an outwardly extending edge 14. Applicant respectfully traverse this rejection.

Notwithstanding the Office Action assertions as to what this document discloses, Applicant submits that this document fails to disclose, or even suggest: inter alia, one of an anti-slip material and a vibration-damping material *attached to an annular surface of* one of the outwardly extending edge and the outwardly extending edge segments, as recited in amended independent claims 1 and 47.

Applicant acknowledges that Fig. 2 of ROTH disclose a hollow cylinder member 12 having an outwardly extending edge 14 and that an elastically deformable member 16 having an outer surface is coupled to an inner surface of the hollow cylinder member 12. However, it is apparent from a fair reading of the disclosure that ROTH does not disclose, or even suggest, one of an anti-slip material and a vibration-damping material *attached to an annular surface of* one of the outwardly extending edge and the outwardly extending edge segments. Applicant notes, in particular, that Fig. 2 of ROTH shows no such material attached, or even arranged, on the flange 14.

By way of non-limiting example, Applicant's invention provides for attaching one of an anti-slip material and a vibration-damping material 1-3 to the edge or edge segments 1-R by e.g., adhesive bonding or vulcanization (see paragraph [0043]).

Thus, Applicant submits that the above-noted claims are not disclosed, or even suggested, by any proper reading of ROTH.

Applicant further notes that, for an anticipation rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102 to be proper, each element of the claim in question must be disclosed in a single document, and

if the document relied upon does not do so, then the rejection must be withdrawn.

Because each of these documents fails to disclose at least the above mentioned features as recited in independent claims 1 and 47, Applicant submits that this document does not disclose all the claimed features recited in at least independent claims 1 and 47.

Furthermore, Applicant submits that dependent claims 9-15, 17 and 48 are allowable at least for the reason that these claims depend from allowable base claims and because these claims recite additional features that further define the present invention. In particular, Applicant submits that no proper reading of ROTH discloses or suggests, in combination: that the outwardly extending edge or the outwardly extending edge segments extend substantially perpendicular to an axis running through the hollow cylinder member as recited in claim 9; that the vibration-damping ring comprises a first annular projecting portion and a second annular projecting portion and wherein the first annular projecting portion extends beyond the first end of the hollow cylinder member by a given amount as recited in claim 10; that the vibration-damping ring comprises a first annular projecting portion and a second annular projecting portion and wherein the second annular projecting portion extends beyond the second end of the hollow cylinder member by a given amount as recited in claim 11; that the vibration-damping ring comprises a first annular projecting portion and a second annular projecting portion and wherein the first and second annular projecting portions extend respectively beyond the first and second ends of the hollow cylinder member by substantially equal amounts as recited in claim 12; that the second end comprises an annular base surface as recited in claim 13; that the vibration-damping ring comprises at least one of a vibration-damping material, an elastomeric material, and a

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rubber material as recited in claim 14; that the vibration-damping ring is one of permanently joined and non-removably fixed to the inner surface of the hollow cylinder member as recited in claim 15; that the vibration-damping ring is connected to the inner surface of the hollow cylinder member via one of adhesive bonding and vulcanizing as recited in claim 16; that the hollow cylinder member is made of a metal as recited in claim 17; and a detachable connection arrangement for connecting a first component having an opening to a second component having an opening, the connection arrangement comprising the vibration-damping ring insert arrangement of claim 47 and the first component being coupled to the second component via the vibration-damping ring insert arrangement as recited in claim 48.

Applicant requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of the above-noted claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Traversal of Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Over Roth alone

Applicant traverses the rejection of claims 15, 16 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over ROTH alone.

The Examiner asserted that ROTH teaches all of the claimed features except for the recited attachment of the vibration-damping ring to the hollow cylinder member and a hollow cylinder member made of spring steel. However, the Examiner asserts that ROTH teaches attachment by friction locking and that it would have been obvious to modify this attachment to use the recited attachment in place of the disclosed mechanical attachment.

The Examiner also asserts that the selection of the material for the hollow cylinder member is within the ordinary skill level of one having ordinary skill in the art. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection and the Examiner's assertions.

Applicant respectfully submits that this rejection is improper at least for the reasons indicated above with regard to claim 1, from which these claims depend.

Applicant further notes that the Examiner's comments in support of this rejection on pages 7 and 8 of the Office Action indicate that ROTH, in fact, teaches away from attaching a vibration-dampening insert to the hollow cylinder member.

Thus, even if ROTH were modified as suggested by the Examiner, which Applicant submits it cannot be, ROTH would nevertheless lack features which are recited in at least independent claim 1. Moreover, Applicant submits that ROTH fails to disclose or suggest the requisite motivation or rationale for modifying ROTH in the manner asserted by the Examiner.

Applicant reminds the Examiner of the guidelines identified in M.P.E.P section 2141 which state that "[i]n determining the propriety of the Patent Office case for obviousness in the first instance, it is necessary to ascertain whether or not the reference teachings would appear to be sufficient for one of ordinary skill in the relevant art having the reference before him to make the proposed substitution, combination, or other modification." *In re Linter*, 458 F.2d 1013, 1016, 173 USPQ 560, 562 (CCPA 1972).

As this section clearly indicates, "[o]bviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the

references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988); *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992)."

Moreover, it has been legally established that "[t]he mere fact that references can be combined or modified does not render the resultant combination obvious unless the prior art also suggests the desirability of the combination. *In re Mills*, 916 F.2d 680, 16 USPQ2d 1430 (Fed. Cir. 1990) Although a prior art device 'may be capable of being modified to run the way the apparatus is claimed, there must be a suggestion or motivation in the reference to do so.' 916 F.2d at 682, 16 USPQ2d at 1432.). See also *In re Fritch*, 972 F.2d 1260, 23 USPQ2d 1780 (Fed. Cir. 1992) (flexible landscape edging device which is conformable to a ground surface of varying slope not suggested by combination of prior art references)."

Additionally, it has been held that "[a] statement that modifications of the prior art to meet the claimed invention would have been 'well within the ordinary skill of the art at the time the claimed invention was made' because the references relied upon teach that all aspects of the claimed invention were individually known in the art is not sufficient to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness without some objective reason to combine the teachings of the references. *Ex parte Levengood*, 28 USPQ2d 1300 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1993)."

Thus, Applicant submits that there is no motivation or rationale disclosed or suggested in the art to modify ROTH in the manner asserted by the Examiner. Nor does the Examiner's opinion provide a proper basis for these features or for the motivation to

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modify this document in the manner suggested by the Examiner. Therefore, Applicant submits that the invention as recited in at least independent claim 1 is not rendered obvious by any reasonable inspection of the disclosure of the applied prior art.

Finally, Applicant submits that claims 15, 16 and 18 are allowable at least for the reason that these claims depend from an allowable base claim and because these claims recite additional features that further define the present invention. In particular, Applicant submits that no proper modification of ROTH discloses or suggests: that the vibration-damping ring is one of permanently joined and non-removably fixed to the inner surface of the hollow cylinder member as recited in claim 15; that the vibration-damping ring is connected to the inner surface of the hollow cylinder member via one of adhesive bonding and vulcanizing as recited in claim 16; and that the metal comprises spring steel as recited in claim 18.

Accordingly, Applicant requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of the above-noted claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) and indicate that these claims are allowable.

Over Roth with Bondarowicz

Applicant traverses the rejection of claims 2 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over ROTH in view of US published patent application No. 2002/0009351 to BONDAROWICZ et al.

The Examiner asserted that ROTH teaches all of the claimed features except for the recited resilient retaining members. However, the Examiner asserts that BONDAROWICZ

teaches this feature and that it would have been obvious to combine the teachings of these documents. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection and the Examiner's assertions.

Applicant respectfully submits that this rejection is improper at least for the reasons indicated above with regard to claim 1, from which these claims depend.

Furthermore, Applicant submits that BONDAROWICZ, like ROTH, is entirely silent with regard to *one of an anti-slip material and a vibration-damping material attached to an annular surface of one of the outwardly extending edge and the outwardly extending edge segments*, as recited in amended independent claim 1.

Applicant acknowledges that Figs. 1 and 2 of BONDAROWICZ disclose a hollow cylinder member 14 having an outwardly extending edge 14 and resilient retaining members 30. However, it is apparent from a fair reading of the disclosure that BONDAROWICZ does not disclose, or even suggest, one of an anti-slip material and a vibration-damping material *attached to an annular surface of one of the outwardly extending edge and the outwardly extending edge segments*. Applicant notes, in particular, that Fig. 2 of BONDAROWICZ shows no such material attached, or even arranged, on the flange 14.

Thus, even if ROTH were modified as suggested by the Examiner in view of BONDAROWICZ, which Applicant submits it cannot be, ROTH and BONDAROWICZ would nevertheless lack features which are recited in at least independent claim 1. Moreover, Applicant submits that each of ROTH and BONDAROWICZ fails to disclose or suggest the requisite motivation or rationale for modifying ROTH in view of BONDAROWICZ in the manner asserted by the Examiner.

Thus, Applicant submits that there is no motivation or rationale disclosed or suggested in the art to combine ROTH or BONDAROWICZ in the manner asserted by the Examiner. Nor does the Examiner's opinion provide a proper basis for these features or for the motivation to combine these documents in the manner suggested by the Examiner. Therefore, Applicant submits that the invention as recited in at least independent claim 1 is not rendered obvious by any reasonable inspection of the disclosure of the applied prior art documents.

Finally, Applicant submits that claims 2 and 3 are allowable at least for the reason that these claims depend from an allowable base claim and because these claims recite additional features that further define the present invention. In particular, Applicant submits that no proper combination of ROTH and BONDAROWICZ discloses or suggests: that the arrangement further comprises a plurality of holding elements extending outwardly from an outer surface of the hollow cylinder member, whereby the plurality of holding elements are adapted to secure the hollow cylinder member in an opening of a component as recited in claim 2; and that each holding element comprises a resilient retaining member as recited in claim 3.

Accordingly, Applicant requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of the above-noted claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) and indicate that these claims are allowable.

Over Radtke with Bondarowicz

Applicant traverses the rejection of claims 2 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as

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being unpatentable over RADTKE in view of US published patent application No. 2002/0009351 to BONDAROWICZ et al.

The Examiner asserted that RADTKE teaches all of the claimed features except for the recited resilient retaining members. However, the Examiner asserts that BONDAROWICZ teaches this feature and that it would have been obvious to combine the teachings of these documents. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection and the Examiner's assertions.

Applicant respectfully submits that this rejection is improper at least for the reasons indicated above with regard to claim 1, from which these claims depend.

Furthermore, Applicant submits that BONDAROWICZ, like RADTKE, is entirely silent with regard to *one of an anti-slip material and a vibration-damping material attached to an annular surface of one of the outwardly extending edge and the outwardly extending edge segments*, as recited in amended independent claim 1.

Again, Applicant acknowledges that Figs. 1 and 2 of BONDAROWICZ disclose a hollow cylinder member 14 having an outwardly extending edge 14 and resilient retaining members 30. However, it is apparent from a fair reading of the disclosure that BONDAROWICZ does not disclose, or even suggest, *one of an anti-slip material and a vibration-damping material attached to an annular surface of one of the outwardly extending edge and the outwardly extending edge segments*. Applicant notes, in particular, that Fig. 2 of BONDAROWICZ shows no such material attached, or even arranged, on the flange 14.

Thus, even if RADTKE were modified as suggested by the Examiner in view of BONDAROWICZ, which Applicant submits it cannot be, RADTKE and BONDAROWICZ would nevertheless lack features which are recited in at least independent claim 1. Moreover, Applicant submits that each of RADTKE and BONDAROWICZ fails to disclose or suggest the requisite motivation or rationale for modifying RADTKE in view of BONDAROWICZ in the manner asserted by the Examiner.

Thus, Applicant submits that there is no motivation or rationale disclosed or suggested in the art to combine RADTKE or BONDAROWICZ in the manner asserted by the Examiner. Nor does the Examiner's opinion provide a proper basis for these features or for the motivation to combine these documents in the manner suggested by the Examiner. Therefore, Applicant submits that the invention as recited in at least independent claim 1 is not rendered obvious by any reasonable inspection of the disclosure of the applied prior art documents.

Finally, Applicant submits that claims 2 and 3 are allowable at least for the reason that these claims depend from an allowable base claim and because these claims recite additional features that further define the present invention. In particular, Applicant submits that no proper combination of RADTKE and BONDAROWICZ discloses or suggests: that the arrangement further comprises a plurality of holding elements extending outwardly from an outer surface of the hollow cylinder member, whereby the plurality of holding elements are adapted to secure the hollow cylinder member in an opening of a component as recited in claim 2; and that each holding element comprises a resilient retaining member as recited in claim 3.

Accordingly, Applicant requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of the above-noted claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) and indicate that these claims are allowable.

Over Radtke with Hein

Applicant traverses the rejection of claims 4-8 and 10-12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over RADTKE in view of US patent No. 5,261,650 to HEIN.

The Examiner asserted that RADTKE teaches all of the claimed features except for the recited retaining groove and the recited retaining ring. However, the Examiner asserts that HEIN teaches these features and that it would have been obvious to combine the teachings of these documents. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection and the Examiner's assertions.

Applicant respectfully submits that this rejection is improper at least for the reasons indicated above with regard to claim 1, from which these claims depend.

Furthermore, Applicant submits that HEIN, like RADTKE, is entirely silent with regard to *one of an anti-slip material and a vibration-damping material attached to an annular surface of one of the outwardly extending edge and the outwardly extending edge segments*, as recited in amended independent claim 1.

Applicant acknowledges that Fig. 1 of HEIN shows a device having a groove within which a retaining ring 33 is disposed. However, it is apparent from a fair reading of the disclosure that HEIN does not disclose, or even suggest, *one of an anti-slip material and a vibration-damping material attached to an annular surface of one of the outwardly*

extending edge and the outwardly extending edge segments of a hollow cylinder member. Applicant notes, in particular, that Fig. 1 of HEIN shows no such hollow cylinder member, much less, a material attached to an annular surface of one of the outwardly extending edge and the outwardly extending edge segments.

Thus, even if RADTKE were modified as suggested by the Examiner in view of HEIN, which Applicant submits it cannot be, RADTKE and HEIN would nevertheless lack features which are recited in at least independent claim 1. Moreover, Applicant submits that each of RADTKE and HEIN fails to disclose or suggest the requisite motivation or rationale for modifying RADTKE in view of HEIN in the manner asserted by the Examiner.

Thus, Applicant submits that there is no motivation or rationale disclosed or suggested in the art to combine RADTKE or HEIN in the manner asserted by the Examiner. Nor does the Examiner's opinion provide a proper basis for these features or for the motivation to combine these documents in the manner suggested by the Examiner. Therefore, Applicant submits that the invention as recited in at least independent claim 1 is not rendered obvious by any reasonable inspection of the disclosure of the applied prior art documents.

Finally, Applicant submits that claims 4-8 and 10-12 are allowable at least for the reason that these claims depend from an allowable base claim and because these claims recite additional features that further define the present invention. In particular, Applicant submits that no proper combination of RADTKE and HEIN discloses or suggests: that the hollow cylinder member comprises an external circumferential retaining groove as recited in claim 4; that the arrangement further comprises one of a securing ring and a retaining

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ring configured to engage the external circumferential retaining groove as recited in claim 5; that the arrangement further comprises inwardly extending spring tappets arranged on one of the securing or the retaining ring as recited in claim 6; that the arrangement further comprises one of a securing ring and a retaining ring configured to engage an outer circumferential surface of the hollow cylinder member as recited in claim 7; that the arrangement further comprises inwardly extending spring tappets arranged on one of the securing or the retaining ring as recited in claim 8; that the vibration-damping ring comprises a first annular projecting portion and a second annular projecting portion and wherein the first annular projecting portion extends beyond the first end of the hollow cylinder member by a given amount as recited in claim 10; that the vibration-damping ring comprises a first annular projecting portion and a second annular projecting portion and wherein the second annular projecting portion extends beyond the second end of the hollow cylinder member by a given amount as recited in claim 11; and that the vibration-damping ring comprises a first annular projecting portion and a second annular projecting portion and wherein the first and second annular projecting portions extend respectively beyond the first and second ends of the hollow cylinder member by substantially equal amounts as recited in claim 12.

Accordingly, Applicant requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of the above-noted claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) and indicate that these claims are allowable.

Over Roth with Hein

Applicant traverses the rejection of claims 4-8, 19-21 and 40 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over ROTH in view of HEIN.

The Examiner asserted that ROTH teaches all of the claimed features except for the recited retaining groove and the recited retaining ring. However, the Examiner asserts that HEIN teaches these features and that it would have been obvious to combine the teachings of these documents. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection and the Examiner's assertions.

Applicant respectfully submits that this rejection is improper at least for the reasons indicated above with regard to claim 1, from which these claims depend.

Furthermore, Applicant submits that HEIN, like ROTH, is entirely silent with regard to *one of an anti-slip material and a vibration-damping material attached to an annular surface of one of the outwardly extending edge and the outwardly extending edge segments*, as recited in amended independent claim 1.

As explained above, Applicant does not dispute that Fig. 1 of HEIN shows a device having a groove within which a retaining ring 33 is disposed. However, it is apparent from a fair reading of the disclosure that HEIN does not disclose, or even suggest, *one of an anti-slip material and a vibration-damping material attached to an annular surface of one of the outwardly extending edge and the outwardly extending edge segments* of a hollow cylinder member. Applicant notes, in particular, that Fig. 1 of HEIN shows no such hollow cylinder member, much less, a material attached to an annular surface of one of the outwardly extending edge and the outwardly extending edge segments.

Thus, even if ROTH were modified as suggested by the Examiner in view of HEIN, which Applicant submits it cannot be, ROTH and HEIN would nevertheless lack features which are recited in at least independent claim 1. Moreover, Applicant submits that each of ROTH and HEIN fails to disclose or suggest the requisite motivation or rationale for modifying ROTH in view of HEIN in the manner asserted by the Examiner.

Thus, Applicant submits that there is no motivation or rationale disclosed or suggested in the art to combine ROTH or HEIN in the manner asserted by the Examiner. Nor does the Examiner's opinion provide a proper basis for these features or for the motivation to combine these documents in the manner suggested by the Examiner. Therefore, Applicant submits that the invention as recited in at least independent claim 1 is not rendered obvious by any reasonable inspection of the disclosure of the applied prior art documents.

Finally, Applicant submits that the rejection of claim 19 is moot inasmuch as claim 19 has been canceled and that claims 4-8, 20, 21 and 40 are allowable at least for the reason that these claims depend from an allowable base claim and because these claims recite additional features that further define the present invention. In particular, Applicant submits that no proper combination of ROTH and HEIN discloses or suggests: that the hollow cylinder member comprises an external circumferential retaining groove as recited in claim 4; that the arrangement further comprises one of a securing ring and a retaining ring configured to engage the external circumferential retaining groove as recited in claim 5; that the arrangement further comprises inwardly extending spring tappets arranged on one of the securing or the retaining ring as recited in claim 6; that the arrangement further

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comprises one of a securing ring and a retaining ring configured to engage an outer circumferential surface of the hollow cylinder member as recited in claim 7; that the arrangement further comprises inwardly extending spring tappets arranged on one of the securing or the retaining ring as recited in claim 8; that the anti-slip material or the vibration-damping material comprises one of a rubber layer and an elastomeric layer as recited in claim 20; that the one of an anti-slip material and vibration-damping material is connected to the annular surface by one of adhesive bonding and vulcanizing as recited in claim 21; and that the hollow cylinder member is adapted to one of compress elastically and compress radially, whereby an outer diameter of the hollow cylinder member is capable of being reduced by compression as recited in claim 40.

Accordingly, Applicant requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of the above-noted claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) and indicate that these claims are allowable.

New Claims are also Allowable

Applicant submits that new claims 51 and 52 are also allowable over the applied art of record. Specifically, claims 51 and 52 recite a combination of features which are clearly not disclosed or suggested by the applied art of record.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests consideration of these claims and further request that the above-noted claims be indicated as being allowable.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that none of the references of record, either taken alone or in any proper combination thereof, anticipate or render obvious the Applicant's invention, as recited in each of the pending claims. The applied references of record have been discussed and distinguished, while significant claimed features of the present invention have been pointed out.

Accordingly, reconsideration of the outstanding Office Action and allowance of the present application and all the claims therein are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to refund excess payments and charge any additional fee necessary to have this paper entered to Deposit Account No. 19-0089.

Respectfully submitted,
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Reg. No. 35,043

August 29, 2005
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